Designated air routes for helicopters

1390. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal has been formulated to chart out designated air routes for helicopters, particularly during their take off and landing, so as to eliminate their queue up at airports and/or mid air hovering on the taxiway; and

(b) if so, the details thereof with the present status?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Action to identify the designated area for helicopter operation at Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Chennai Airports has been initiated. Procedures are likely to be worked out subsequently after completion of identification work of the designated area.

Delay in privatisation of Civil Aviation sector

1391. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that process of privatisation in civil aviation sector has been delayed;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) if not, the progress made in this regard;

(d) whether any specific time-frame has been fixed for the completion of process; and

(e) if so, the details thereof alongwith the measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (e) Private airlines are already operating in the domestic air transport business. As regards privatisation of Air India Limited and Indian Airlines Limited, the Government have decided to keep them out of the disinvestment list. Government have also decided to restructure airports at Delhi and Mumbai through Joint

Venture route, in which Airports Authority of India alongwith other Public Sector Undertaking of Government of India, will hold 26% equity. An Empowered Group of Ministers (EGOM) has been constituted to take decisions regarding modalities, evaluation criteria etc. with regard to restructuring process of these airports.

Permission for foreign tourist charter flights

1392. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to allow foreign tourist charter flights on almost all the major airports;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what other steps are in the pipeline to attract more foreign tourists?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) As per the existing guidelines, besides the 12 international airports, tourist charter flights can also be operated to all airports having customs and immigration facilities.

(c) As in the past, an "open sky policy" has been declared for the period December, 2003 to February, 2004 to meet the extra demand during the peak tourist season, under which designated foreign carriers have been allowed to operate extra-bilateral flights subject to the terms of existing commercial agreements with designated Indian carriers.

Bangalore international airport project

1393. SHRI M V. RAJASEKHARAN:
SHRI JANARADHANA POOJARY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the stage of progress on international airport at Devanahalli, Bangalore;

(b) by when the actual work of the airport will start;

(c) what is the original estimated cost of the airport project; and